**“SPIRITS OF THE RAILWAY” – Checking for Understanding**

**Why did so many Chinese choose to move to the New World?**

* Flooding in southern China
* Starvation
* Lack of work/jobs in China
* The promise of work and riches in the New World

**What types of labor/jobs brought Chinese to the New World?**

* Gold mining
* Farming
* Laboring (through towns and forests, from job to job)

**What process was used to build the railway?**

* “hacked at hills with hand-scoops and shovels to level a pathway for the train”
* “hammers and chisels chipped boulders into gravel and fill”
* “dynamite and drills thrust tunnels deep into the mountain”

**What kinds of harsh conditions or dangers were the railway workers exposed to?**

* “my own brother was buried alive in a mudslide”
* “my Uncle was killed in a dynamite blast”
* “The white boss treats us like mules and dogs”
* “the men tied potato sacks around their feet”
* “They dug graves for two works who had succumbed to sickness”

**Why did Chu bury chopsticks and straw matting at the top of the cliff?**

* His father’s ghost tells him he’s been crushed flat in an explosion
* Chinese bodies have been thrown into the river and have no resting place
* Chopsticks represent bones/straw matting represents flesh
* Chu wants to give his father a resting place and to take away his pain